

Chicopee Register

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Mayor's Office brings fight to COVID-19



Normally bustling with pedestrian and vehicle traffic, Chicopee Center has quieted significantly during the coronavirus pandemic. Mayor John Vieau and his office is working to coordinate the city's response.

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

As the city of Chicopee continues fight COVID-19, the Mayor's Office is taking charge. Mayor John Vieau is working tirelessly to preserve the well-being of residents while preparing for the next unexpected twist or turn.

"Over the last few weeks, my focus has completely

changed," said Vieau on March 30. "Instead of meeting people, conducting outreach events and understanding the issues that are important to my constituents, I now dedicate most of each day to the impact COVID-19 is having on our residents, services and our businesses."

Vieau is maintaining daily contact with the Office of Gov. Charlie Baker, federal and state officials, local mayors and

"community partners" such as the Westover Air Reserve Base.

Vieau is also communicating directly with City Council President Shane Brooks, Vice President Frank Laflamme and is updating City Council as a whole multiple times a week.

"We must continue to conduct city business and keep the city operating to provide the essential services everyone expects," said Vieau. "We have

already had one City Council meeting with the use of audio conferencing and expect future meetings to have audio conferencing along with public broadcasting with Chicopee TV and Vimeo."

All municipal departments are operating with minimum staffing, and safety is being prioritized by all public safety

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Calling all residents!

Kids, parents, adults, those on the front lines, those at home and everyone in between, Turley Publications wants to share the experiences of all our residents during the COVID-19 emergency. Essays, drawings and photos are all very welcome. Help us document this historic time with your experiences by sending submissions to tyler@turley.com



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Learn about Turley the turtle on page 2, join the fun, you may win a prize.



CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Hospital staff man the front line response

By Dalton Zbierski
and Melina Bourdeau
Staff Writers

While patients fight a war against COVID-19, medical personnel roam the front lines.

Medical professionals at Baystate Hospitals in the region, Cooley Dickinson in Northampton and Holyoke Hospital each face a similar set of issues caused by the pandemic, which are being navigated on a daily basis.

As of March 25, throughout the Baystate Health network, 835 individuals have been tested; 373 have come back negative; 52 positive and 410 are still pending results.

Cooley Dickinson had issued 14 positive tests for COVID-19 and was in the process of investigating 92 additional people, as of the same date.

Measures taken thus far

At the Holyoke Medical Center, one patient was being treated for COVID-19 as of March 23, but no nurses were on self-quarantine at that time.



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Baystate Medical Center has constructed a temporary rapid response triage facility outside the Emergency Department as a result of the demands created by the coronavirus pandemic, according to Michelle Holmgren, of Baystate Health. "These are designed to handle

some 30 to 40 patients; the triage area will serve as a rapid, initial screening venue for staff to identify those patients of most immediate need."

Neither Holyoke nor Cooley Dickinson have transformed its waiting rooms into triage units and both are strict-

ly sticking to protocols handed down by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In order to meet the growing number of cases at each hospital, various safety measures have been made.

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STAFF PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

Counting turtles



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Elms College adapts to life amid shutdown

All classes now taking place online

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

Coast to coast, thousands of academic institutions have been impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19. The College of Our Lady of the Elms refuses to be among those that are derailed by crisis. The new strain of coronavirus forced Elms College to empty its Springfield Street campus; only essential personnel remain. With in-person lectures no longer an option, the school shifted the entirety of its focus to on-line course work. “Elms has had fully online programs for several years now, but this is certainly unprecedented where, in the middle of a semester, we’re telling every single instructor for every single course that we need to move you to an on-line environment. We saw it as the only option to continue learning and get our students to the end of the semester,” said Dr. Walter



STAFF PHOTOS BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

Normally full of students, the campus of Elms College is now quiet as students conduct education online amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Breau, Elms vice president of academic affairs.

On March 23, students entered the world of learning exclusively on-line. Professors are able to lead lectures using interactive meeting applications such as Moodle and Zoom, “which allows synchronous and asynchronous connections between students and their instructor.”

Classes are still scheduled to occur when they originally were. Technology enables several dozen students to participate simultaneously in the same lecture.

Training sessions and support systems were put in place to aid instructors who were unfamiliar with online coursework. Staff members trained for their new responsibilities during Spring Break, which occurred from March 14-22.

“We have instructors who have done online teaching for a long time and are very comfortable with it, but we also have instructors who have not done an online course ever. We’ve asked ourselves how we can help these instructors get comfortable teaching in an online environment and comfortable enough to interact with students,” said Breau.

Online communication is not strictly limited to academic matters; from clubs to athletic teams, the college is maximizing its online resources, hoping to afford students a platform for engagement.

“There’s some things that we can’t replicate, but we’re trying very hard to keep students connected to each other as we get through the rest of the semester,” said Breau.

When Gov. Charlie Baker closed down schools throughout the Commonwealth on March 15, administrators at Elms College hastily ventured into uncharted territory. Breau credits the school community for its ability to adapt and move forward under pressure.

“We wouldn’t be in nearly as good of shape as we are today if it wasn’t for everyone involved from students, faculty, staff and the administrators being involved in helping us get



Elms College is taking steps to keep students and staff safe during the new coronavirus pandemic. All classes are taking place online.



The campus of Elms College is now quiet as the college takes steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 infections. All classes are taking place online.

up to speed very quickly,” he said.

Breau noted that the school has been in frequent contact with a variety of local and state officials. The college has made all of its decisions based off of facts that were gathered by communicating with the Department of Health, the CDC, the federal government and City Hall.

While vast majority of students are now home, a small group of international students remain on-campus and are fed dining room food each day. A number of Elms employees are also present, continuing their work.

Public Safety personnel are considered essential, although a smaller team is required at night without students on campus. Administrative members and the IT staff is required as well.

The college’s maintenance crew has maintained a steady presence across campus, completing “deep cleaning” while following social distancing guidelines. Limited staff can be found in other offices.

“Our goal is only essential personnel,” said Breau. “We limit how many people can be on campus at any given time; one person per office. We

make sure that we’re following social distancing and cleaning techniques; the sort of things that people are doing everywhere.”

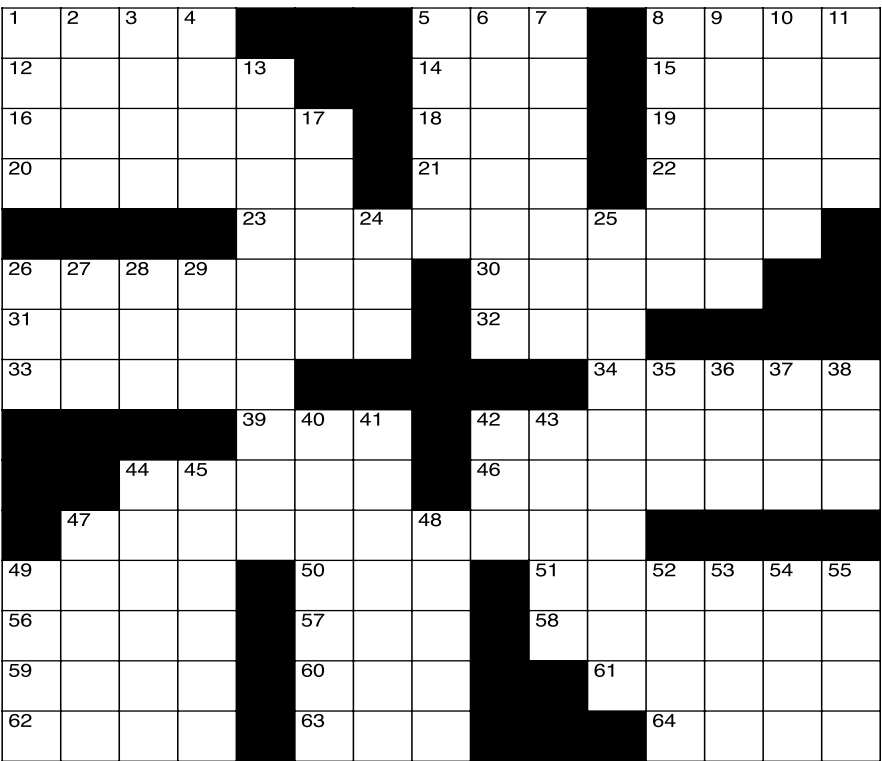
Elms College, located within a mile of City Hall on Springfield St., has been a fixture in Chicopee since its establishment in 1928. This is the first time that on-campus learning has been prohibited during a semester.

Fortunately, mental health services are still accessible to students online. Local students may still be permitted one-on-one sessions, and administrators are connecting out-of-state students with mental health professionals that are proximate to their current location.

In an effort to make a difference, Elms College reached out to Baystate Health to offer space for patients. The course of action is not currently needed but maybe required down the line.

“Because we’re only five minutes from Baystate Health, we did offer one of our dormitories for space for overflow; not so much to house coronavirus patients but to house patients that are in the hospital for different reasons so that they could free up space for coronavirus [patients],” said Breau.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Bond villain Mikkelsen
- 5. A team's best pitcher
- 8. French river
- 12. Mountain nymph (Greek)
- 14. City of Angels airport
- 15. Military force
- 16. Scrawny
- 18. Value
- 19. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
- 20. Highly seasoned sausage
- 21. Trouble
- 22. Prong
- 23. Showing varying colors
- 26. Cloaked
- 30. Renters sign one
- 31. Acquires
- 32. Type of language (abbr.)
- 33. Partner to pains
- 34. Third portion of the

CLUES DOWN

- 35. Type of bulb
- 36. Opposite of beginning
- 37. Utilize
- 38. Type of student
- 40. Deficiency of moisture
- 41. Areas of the eye
- 42. Select
- 43. Sheets of floating ice
- 44. Priests who act as mediums
- 45. Roof of the mouth
- 47. Unnatural
- 48. Illuminated
- 49. There are three famous ones
- 52. Large, fast Australian birds
- 53. "Dracula" heroine Harker
- 54. Substitutes (abbr.)
- 55. Tax
- 62. IEEE
- 63. Yew
- 64. Sass

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Female parents
- 2. Region
- 3. Transaction
- 4. Heroic tale
- 5. Of algae
- 6. Luminous intensity unit
- 7. Uncovers
- 8. French commune name
- 9. Poisonous gas
- 10. Pearl Jam's bassist
- 11. Horse groom in India
- 13. Destroyed
- 17. A way to alter
- 24. Promotional materials
- 25. American state
- 26. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand
- 27. "Modern Family" network
- 28. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
- 29. Exercise system __-bo

- 39. Excessively theatrical actor
- 42. Infraction
- 44. Classical music for the stage
- 46. Slogged
- 47. One who terminates
- 49. Breakfast is an important one
- 50. Moved earth
- 51. Medical procedures
- 56. Genus of clams
- 57. Not well
- 58. Comparative figure of speech
- 59. Covered thinly with gold
- 60. Principle underlying the universe
- 61. A parent's sisters
- 62. Professional engineering group
- 63. Coniferous tree
- 64. Impudence

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 8

Keeping faith alive throughout the city

Churches adapt to coronavirus pandemic

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

This isn't the first time in human history that places of worship have been forced to shutter, but the sensation is painfully unfamiliar to most Chicopee residents.

Across the country, religious communities are finding new ways to celebrate their faith, local congregations being among them.

"It's very much so uncharted territory psychologically for us. Not only for the priests but also more importantly for the parishioners not being able to participate in the mass, something that many people have done every week for decades," said the Rev. John Connors, pastor of Saint Anne Parish on College Street.

The parish is streaming its masses on Facebook and through the myParish App. Connors noted that baptisms and funeral masses can still occur, but no more than 10 people are allowed inside of the church on any occasion.

Sacraments such as Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation and Last Rights are all being affected as the outbreak of COVID-19 impacts society in ways that were previously unprecedented in the U.S..

The ability to tune into

online streams has been a saving grace for many congregations. LifePoint Church on New Ludlow Road began enhancing its online platform two years ago when multiple snow storms damaged its facility, forcing the parish to hold Sunday masses inside of Bellamy Middle School for 16 months.

"It really made us look at how we do ministry and connect with people without a normal central meeting place. We found out that church is not about the building," said the Rev. Kevin Whitacre, pastor of LifePoint Church.

"We took a lot of lessons from that, which we're using now. We've been investing in video and live streaming over the past year-and-a-half and most of our church family is familiar with it," Whitacre said.

St. Stanislaus Basilica, a prominent feature standing over the heart of Chicopee on Front Street, is eerily quiet on Sundays. The parish is strictly following guidelines and directives implemented by Gov. Charlie Baker and Bishop Mitchell Rozanski of the Diocese of Springfield.

At 9 a.m. each Sunday, the parish is live streaming a mass on its website and Facebook page. The Rev. Joe Bayne noted that Holy Week celebrations will be streamed online, where a variety of recorded discussions can also be found.

"This is a scary time, but we're all in this to-



STAFF PHOTOS BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

First Congregational Church on Chicopee Street is streaming services on Facebook and YouTube during the coronavirus pandemic.

"If you have faith, trust God and pray like crazy, I believe that we can overcome some of the fear. A little bit is normal, but we can't let it cripple us."

- The Rev. Joe Bayne, St. Stanislaus Church

gether. The more that we can strengthen the communications and bonds and give people a hopeful message," said Bayne. "We all keep hearing about the number of deaths and new cases. We need something to hang our hat on; to be honest, I use humor. Certainly not humor about the virus, but humor about other things in life."

Across the city, residents are frightened and understandably so. Their anxiety is well warranted, but local parishes are encouraging perseverance; Bayne offered a unique interpretation.

"Fear has its place in life," he said. "There's fear that keeps us from playing the middle of the road or touching the electric socket or hot stove, or fear of

the dark, but there's also fear that cripples us and doesn't allow us to live. If you have faith, trust God and pray like crazy, I believe that we can overcome some of the fear. A little bit is normal, but we can't let it cripple us."

The First Congregational Church of Chicopee on Chicopee Street is among the parishes facilitating live feed worship, which can be found on its Facebook page and YouTube channel. The Rev. Gary Grimes, the church's settled minister, noted that in these unfamiliar times, a strong sense of community is more important than ever.

"It's vital that we bring together the community for a couple of reasons. The church is central



St. Stanislaus Church on Front Street, a prominent feature in the city's center, is following directives from the Diocese of Springfield by keeping doors closed during the COVID-19 outbreak. Worship services are taking place via online streaming sources.



St. Anne Church on College Street is using streaming services like the myParish application and Facebook for parishioners to take part in worship services in safety during the coronavirus pandemic.

to people's lives for more than just worship; it brings people together. We want to bring some normalcy to people's lives in a time where things are far from normal. I think its helping them to cope and deal with the situation by sharing with the people they're used to sharing with," said Grimes.

Whitacre advises people of all faiths to communicate with their loved

ones and friends. The technology to do so is available and the opportunity awaits.

"As you're thinking of people right now and as you're missing them, reach out to them. Send that text message to that person you haven't to in awhile. Write someone a physical letter. Write somebody a card or send something in the mail; we can still do that. Initiate it and take the step," he said.

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personnel. Social distancing protocol is strictly adhered to by all, but precautions are being put in place in case a Chicopee first responder contracts COVID-19.

"We are securing space for special housing for first responders that are exposed/confirmed COVID-19," said Vieau. "They will be kept away from the public and their families safeguarded. Regardless of test results, first responders with potential exposures to COVID-19 will undergo the 14-day quarantine."

Vieau and his staff continue to operate out of City Hall during the crisis as they work towards implementing policies and procedures to protect residents, most notably the city's elderly population.

"My staff is informed and updated hourly as we work to keep the city of Chicopee Mayor's website up to date with the ever-changing climate. I continue to raise issues of concern, like precautionary measures for our residents to protect and save lives," said Vieau.

On March 24, the city launched a small business emergency Grant Fund to aid businesses that have been impacted over the course of the past month. More services will soon be made available thanks in large part to the city's collaborations with the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center.

Vieau also expects that the \$2 trillion federal stimulus package recently passed by Congress will partially lift the burden off both business owners and residents in the coming weeks.

Chicopee is rich with tradition and culture. It's important to realize that the city's unique sense of community will not be compromised in the wake of the pandemic.

"During this tough time, we are still highlighting local traditions such as the re-opening of Blue Seal Kielbasa, which has been a Chicopee staple for 100 years," said Vieau. "The Chicopee Public Library and the Chicopee Public Schools are offering online programs and we are sharing other activities and past Chicopee TV programs to help keep the faces and community of Chicopee alive."

Vieau also noted that the city has "seen an uptick in community activities like Hearts for Health Care Workers and Teachers," which uses a number of "fun activities" to foster communication between teachers and students.

While addressing all those who live in the city, Vieau once more complimented the efforts of "the first responders, the health care professionals, the grocery workers, the distributors, the truckers and every single essential employee that needs to be at work or on the front line."

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EDITORIAL

Coronavirus is a real community threat

Americans don't like being told what to do, and the government's been doing an awful lot of telling lately.

Don't eat out. Don't send your kids to school. Don't have a party. Don't watch a parade.

The past few weeks have seen a massive upheaval in almost every aspect of almost every American's life — home, work, recreation. None of it has been welcome. But — to repeat the phrase we all hated when we heard it as children from our parents, our doctors and our teachers — it's for our own good. The point is to protect us from the coronavirus.

COVID-19 quarantined an entire metropolis in China.

It shut down essentially the whole country of Italy.

COVID-19 is not a possibility or a far-off fear. It's a real thing that has been killing thousands of people around the world. It's here now in our own community, and the only way we can stop it is to keep it from jumping from person to person. And the only way to do that is to keep people away from people.

A little skepticism about the claims made by politicians is a healthy thing, especially when they're trying to justify restrictions on freedom of movement and commerce. But this isn't a good time to take a chance on the experts being wrong. Everyone in a position of power is saying the same thing — the coronavirus is a real threat. Federal, state and local officials. Doctors and public health agencies. Business leaders. Politicians from both major parties.

That the American death toll hasn't yet reached the crisis levels of Italy or China is not a testament to some inherent superiority or hardiness of the American public. It's merely a function of the fact that the coronavirus infected those countries earlier. Public health officials aren't responding to actual deaths on our shores. They're looking at how the disease has spread in other countries and trying to stop it from spreading that way here.

What can you do?

- Practice good hygiene — wash hands frequently for 20 seconds with hot, soapy water, cough into your sleeve rather than hand, disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items in the home.

- Stay home. Work from home, learn from home, eat at home. Shop online and have items delivered. Read books and watch television rather than going out for entertainment. Don't host or attend parties.

- Limit contact between elderly people and young people. Senior citizens are especially susceptible to COVID-19, and children can carry the virus without showing any symptoms.

- If you begin to experience a fever or flu-like symptoms, call your doctor.

Unfortunately, by the time symptoms appear, the patient has already been carrying — and spreading — the disease for as long as two weeks. Any of us could be infected right now and not realize it, so it's important that all of us work together to halt its spread, whether we "feel sick" or not.

The government is forcing some of these choices on us. Schools, senior centers and government offices are closed. Public gatherings of large numbers of people have been banned. Restaurants are closed for all but takeout and delivery.

Some of these lifestyle changes are easy. Some are difficult. Some may even be annoying or burdensome. But every one of them is better than getting infected. Even more importantly, every one of them is better than getting your grandparents, your parents or your elderly neighbors infected, too. Or a friend already battling a chronic illness.

This will come to pass and life will return to normal. We can get there together. As a community.



Garden space worthy of personalizing

I have almost as much fun accessorizing my garden as I do planting it! With the amount of statuary, bird baths, sun dials and metal work seen popping up at nurseries and garden centers these days I know I am not alone. What is your personal fancy? Perhaps you decorate your vegetable or flower gardens for functional reasons or maybe to add a formal flair to your landscape. Still some of you may choose an outdoor venue to let your whimsical side shine through. Whatever the case may be, garden art is the rage. What better time than now to dream about our outdoor spaces?

Who would have thought that the lowly scarecrow, born from the rag pile, would rise to such high esteem to claim a space in suburban gardens? Not surprising, considering our love of all things folksy. Some of us still fashion scarecrows for the reason they were intended: to keep critters out of the vegetable patch. To be most effective they should move about the garden. My dad had an ingenious idea for making the scarecrow portable. Fabricate the base to which the clothes are attached out of piping (metal or PVC) rather than wood. Then, in several garden hot spots bang rebar or wooden dowels into the ground. The scarecrow can now be moved easily by slipping its base over the rebar or dowel.

Many of us prefer to lure wildlife, namely birds and butterflies, to our gardens by providing them with attractive housing and a source of fresh water. For birdhouses to be functional insure they have a sloped roof to shed water, a perch or other area of traction near the entrance hole, and a removable wall or roof for easy cleaning. Birdbaths are commonly made of ceramic, terra cotta or stone. More shallow baths are made for butterflies, usually with a raised sipping station in the center of the basin. Give each a good scrub under fresh water daily to prevent bacterial growth and algae build up.

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid
Columnist

One way to achieve a formal look in your garden is to include some statuary. These days it need not be expensive, either. Many garden centers now carry nice (and lightweight!) pieces made out of resin.

Take into consideration the symbolic meanings attached to many of our favorite figurines before making your selection. Linda Joan Smith's book entitled "Garden Ornament" offers these suggestions:

The acorn stands for life and fertility, whereas an urn with its lid means death and mourning. A statue of man's best friend is no doubt a symbol of fidelity and acts as guardian of the garden. Doves mean love and constancy, and cherubs are a sure sign of divine wisdom. Don't forget St. Fiacre, he is the patron saint of gardeners!

Sundials add a timeless formality to our gardens. Did you know that sundials have been made since the 16th century? I imagine it was long before that, however, that man began planning his day by the shadows of the sun. Sundial time and our "clock time" are exactly the same only four days out of the year: April 15, June 15, Sept. 1 and Dec. 24. The easiest way to accurately set your sundial is to hope for sun on any of those days and position it to read standard time. Sundials aren't corrected for daylight savings!

There have been lots of posts lately geared at keeping the kids busy during their sojourn from school. I saw some whimsical painted stones that looked cute enough to try ourselves. Cactus, ladybug or frog? Which will we attempt to replicate?

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

Letters to the Editor

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sonal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources.

Send letters to: *The Chicopee Register*, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email chicopeeregister@turley.com.

The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

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Hampden County Sheriff makes operational changes

By Elise Linscott
Staff Writer

LUDLOW – The Hampden County Sheriff’s Department is making several operational changes in light of the novel coronavirus pandemic, including temporarily pausing inmate visits and requiring professional visitors to wear face masks.

The department recently had one person placed in preventative medical quarantine for showing symptoms potentially associated with COVID-19, according to a press release. But as of March 13, that person was symptom-free and determined not to be ill and was removed from preventative medical quarantine.

The department held a recent press conference and announced a number of temporary operational changes, including pausing inmate visits for 60 days or until the threat of COVID-19 passes, authorizing two hours of free phone calls per week and giving each inmate three free envelopes per week.

“These are unprecedented times and to adapt, and best protect our staff, the offenders in our care and the general public, we are taking unprecedented measures that impact virtually every aspect of our operations,” said Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi. “None of these decisions were made lightly and we will continually



STAFF PHOTO BY ELISE LINSKOTT

Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi announces several changes to the department's operations as well as the suspension of inmate visits in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

be evaluating our decisions over the coming weeks to ensure that these changes remain necessary and are the best way to ensure the health and safety of every staff member and person in our care.”

Other operational changes include temporarily stopping all offender-based programming and reducing programming provided by the sheriff’s department; allowing attorney, clergy and court-ordered

visits only if they wear face masks and in a non-contact manner; and altering the PV-TA’s Stonybrook Express bus line, which is subsidized by the sheriff’s department and which will temporarily stop bringing passengers to the correctional facilities.

Work release employees and community service crews assigned to do restitution will discontinue their work until further notice.

Health services will screen and must approve every request for a transfer from other facilities and the department will not accept a transfer unless the subject has already been in custody for at least 14 days and is shown to be symptom-free.

Non-essential staff have been excused from reporting to work. Meal services for inmates will continue as normal and all medical services will continue with additional attention paid to the transmission of infectious diseases throughout the department’s facilities, according to the department.

The Western Mass. County Correctional Officer’s Basic Training Academy has also been closed until further notice. Academy recruits will be screened by health services and will be assigned to work in the facilities to assist staff once cleared.

Courts across the state have been temporarily closed since March 16. The department has since been working to increase its capacity for video conferencing.

The Hampden County Sheriff’s Department serves the communities of Agawam, Blandford, Brimfield, Chester, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Granville, Hampden, Holland, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Monson, Montgomery, Palmer, Russel, Southwick, Springfield, Tolland, Wales, West Springfield, Westfield and Wilbraham.



STAFF PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

Cooley Dickinson had issued 14 positive tests for COVID-19 and was in the process of investigating 92 additional people, as of March 25.



STAFF PHOTO BY MELINA BOURDEAU

As of March 25, throughout Baystate Health, 835 individuals have been tested; 373 have come back negative; 52 positive and 410 are still pending results.

HOSPITALS from page 1

Inside Cooley Dickinson hospital, visitors have been restricted and many employees have been assigned remote work when possible.

As of Wednesday, March 18, Baystate Health restricted its visitor policy and at this time is not allowing visitors at any Baystate Health hospitals.

There are exceptions, at the discretion of Baystate Health, of one parent or guardian for a patient under the age of 18, one birthing partner for a patient in labor, one person at a time for a hospice or end of life patient, one clergy member for an end of life patient and one caretaker for a completely dependent patient.

Seeking medical attention

Holyoke Medical Center advises people with symptoms to call their primary care provider and/or go to the center and follow signs labeled for fever, cough and flu symptoms, which lead to the Emergency Room.

Dr. Armando Paez, chief of infectious diseases at Baystate Health, added that “approximately 80

percent of COVID-19 are mild infections.

“However, this can be a serious infection requiring hospitalization for some, particularly in the elderly and those with diabetes, heart and lung disease,” he said. “Similar to the flu, symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath two to 14 days after exposure. Symptoms can be mild to severe illness and result in pneumonia.”

The medical team at Cooley Dickinson strongly recommends that everyone stay home, isolate, practice social distancing and maintain good hand hygiene.

“That’s the best thing we can do to help decrease the transmission of the virus,” said MacGregor.

Both facilities are in daily communication with local and state officials, the Massachusetts Hospital Association and other hospitals.

Cooley Dickinson is also in touch with its parent hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital.

“Conversations are about testing; supporting our workforce through this public health crisis; planning for a potential surge of patients as well as

managing the daily operations of people who come to the hospital with heart attack, stroke, and other medical conditions that are not related to COVID-19. We are working collaboratively across the region and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,” said MacGregor.

MacGregor explained what symptoms mandate a hospital visit.

“If someone is experiencing common symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever or cough, they should call their primary health care provider for guidance,” she said. “For their safety and the safety of others, please do not go to an urgent care clinic or emergency room unless you have been instructed to do so.”

“Your primary care

provider will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. If you are experiencing life-threatening symptoms such as difficulty in breathing or pressure in the chest, please call 911.”

Medical staff face shortage

Hospitals and medical centers across the state are being also facing a lack of supplies.

Materials that may have been taken for granted last month have quickly become precious commodities. Local facilities are preparing for the worst, and additional materials are needed.

Holyoke Medical Center had adequate supplies as of March 23, but Director of Marketing Re-

becca MacGregor voiced concerns surrounding resupply. The hospital needs N-95 masks and N-99, she said.

However, used or homemade masks will not be accepted, MacGregor added.

Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton adopted a similar policy regarding “risky masks,” but urges residents to donate medical-grade Personal

Protective Equipment.

Acceptable donations include surgical or fluid shield N-95 masks, goggles, safety glasses, disposable gowns, hand sanitizer, bleach and Sani-Wipes.

Provisions can be dropped off at Cooley Dickinson’s North Entrance, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.



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Pride Stores fuel community during COVID-19 pandemic

Chain taking measures to keep customers, staff safe

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

A wide range of essential employees are playing critical roles on the front lines of the novel coronavirus pandemic. Although risky, their daily public appearances are admirable and, above all, necessary.

Gas station employees and food service workers are among the many individuals who continue to work. Pride Stores, a chain of convenience stores, fueling stations and drive-thru restaurants, is firing on all cylinders to ensure the safety all patrons and staff members.

The Fifties Diner, a restaurant at the Pride-operated truck stop on Burnett Road, closed to the public as a result of state and local orders to limit the spread of COVID-19 infections. The operation, however, did not shutter; staff members continue to offer food to truckers traveling up and down the Massachusetts Turnpike.

“The Fifties Diner remains open because we need to keep the truckers going, as well as our staff in Springfield on the Mass Pike,” said John Hesslien, executive vice president at Pride.

“There’s food there and we’ve contacted all of the truckers’ Facebook pag-



STAFF PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

Pride stores including The Fifties Diner on Burnett Road remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic, considered essential business during the current stay at home advisory. The chain is taking multiple steps to keep customers and employees safe.

es to let them know that there’s parking, fuel, our showers are open. They’re all maintained according to what the CDC is asking us to do.”

Pride operates 35 locations in Western Massachusetts, the Berkshires and northern Connecticut. All are undertaking sanitary measures that extend beyond

“what the CDC requires,” said Hesslien.

On an hourly basis, the entirety of each store is sanitized, as are all of the pumps at the location; Pride boasts over 200 gas pumps, conveying the magnitude of the effort. Each drive-thru is also cleaned on the hour.

“Let’s face it, we’re all neighbors and friends and we’re from here. We want to make sure that we’re running really clean so that we’re not doing anything to help spread this nasty virus. We’re keeping our facilities as clean as humanly possible,” said Hesslien, who added that each location remains in close contact with its local Board of Health.

A number of Pride workers have opted to use sick time for as long as possi-

ble; others requested furloughs hoping to expedite the process of collecting unemployment.

Employees still taking shifts are contributing to a new program that enables them to dispense fuel for seniors.

“We do that Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. They come up to the pump, honk their horn and one of our teammates will come out with gloves and what have you. They’ll certainly handle the payment at the pump safely and securely for them,” said Hesslien.

Soon, clerks at all Pride locations will be protected by Plexiglas shields; installations are already underway and are expected to be completed in all stores by the end of this week.

After noting that it’s difficult for workers with families to continue their service, and acknowledging the value of all team members, Hesslien emphasized that all employees who are under the weather have been strongly encouraged to go home or call out.

“There’s no shame in the game of telling someone your sick,” he said. “Let’s face it, we’ve all gone to work with the sniffles and said, ‘I can muster through this today.’ That’s exactly what we don’t want to have happen here so we had to take the stigma out by saying, ‘Now’s not the time to be brave; now’s the time to understand that we’re okay with this, go on home and get healthy.’”

Pride has observed “significant double digit decreases in our business” but is not prioritizing profits over people.

“Everything will bounce back in time, but right now, it’s not about profits. It’s about the public good,” said Hesslien, crediting the “passion of management team at Pride to deliver for their friends and neighbors” for allowing the operation to move forward.

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NAMI conducts support groups via telephone

While public buildings and social gatherings have shut down statewide to limit the impact of the new coronavirus, the National Alliance on Men-

tal Illness-Massachusetts announced call-in capabilities for its Connection Support Groups.

Effective this week, folks will be able to tele-

conference Mondays at 6:30 p.m., Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays at 10 a.m. No password is required; participants need only call 508-206-8720.

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SPRING SPORTS

Latest school closure threatens cancellation of spring tournaments

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

The extended school closure imposed by Gov. Charlie Baker last week has now called into question whether or not school will resume in the 2019-2020 school year, but also whether or not there will even be a shortened regular season for spring sports in 2020.

Numerous schools have students chomping at the bit to get on fields and courts, but the latest closure extension threatens any of that from happening, as well as puts the postseason tournament in serious jeopardy.

MIAA officials and the Board of Directors were scheduled to have another meeting to weigh guidance from the Tournament Management Committee about the prospect of having the tournament.

The current plan was to open up practices for spring sports on Monday, April 27. Games could begin on Monday, May 4.

Last week, Baker announced an extension of the school closure to Monday, May 4. However, depending on how the pandemic numbers shake out, social distancing orders could be lifted sooner. Players could hit fields before school resumes much like they do during the summertime preparing for fall sports.

While it remains a possibility, the MIAA has not discussed the possibility of the entire spring season being cancelled. However, the board of directors did agree that if spring sports did not begin before April 27, there would be no tournament action.

On March 26, the MIAA described the additional school

closure as a fluid situation. The MIAA hopes to provide an update sometime this week.

"Among TMC recommendations to the Board is that if there is a spring season start date of after April 27, there will not be an MIAA tournament," the MIAA website states. "This recommendation, as well as a plan to save a spring season for MIAA student-athletes will be the substance of a March 30 Board meeting."

This recent news from the Governor is surreal. The MIAA will continue to monitor this fluid situation and provide updates regarding spring sports as soon as they are made available. Thank you all for your flexibility, understanding and patience. Support and guidance to our schools, student-athletes and to you, our membership, is priority during this uncertain time.

The spring season has been delayed in the past due to late winter snow that specifically shuts down baseball and softball games till the second or even third week of April. But there has never been a shutdown of action this lengthy.

However, last year, constant rain did wreak havoc on the regular season. In all there was a week of delay to start the season, plus more than a dozen full-fledged rain days that postponed action throughout the spring and resulted in an additional week being added to the regular season.

If spring sports are able to commence on April 27, the regular season would be extended out until June 10, with playoffs to follow in the two weeks after that.

See **SPRING** page 8

BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Chicopee youth take part in Szlats



PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Lauren Cross takes a shot on the hoop.



Davianna Perez gets a shot over an opponent.



Ella Negreu makes a three-point attempt.



Mariah Diaz attempts an off-balance shot on the run.

CHICOPEE – The Szlats Memorial Basketball tournament kicked off last month at Chicopee High School. The Chicopee 5-6 girls team took part in the opening action against Ludlow. Unfortunately, after two days of competition in pool play, the rest of the tournament was shut down due to the coronavirus pandemic.

BASEBALL

Avard to lead Valley Blue Sox in 2020

HOLYOKE – Blue Sox President Fred Ciaglo announced today the hiring of Kate Avard as the team's new General Manager.

Avard, 22, will be returning to the Blue Sox organization after interning with the team during the 2016 season. The Easthampton, MA native, originally from Holyoke, is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst where she earned a B.S. degree in Sport Management from the Isenberg School of Manage-

ment and a B.S. degree studying kinesiology from the School of Public Health and Health Sciences.

"We're very excited to appoint Kate as our new General Manager," said Ciaglo. "Having previously served as one of our interns, she knows the culture and community-oriented mission of our organization. Given her education



Kate Avard

in sport management, Kate will bring strong business fundamentals, creativity and a passion for baseball to the Blue Sox front office."

While at UMass Amherst, Avard served as the Intramural Special Events Assistant and held multiple internships within the Athletic Department. After graduating from UMass Amherst, Avard enrolled in grad-

uate courses studying athletic training and emergency medicine at Boston University.

Avard is eager to return to MacKenzie Stadium and expand her role with the organization.

"Growing up in Holyoke, I attended many Holyoke Giants games, then later Blue Sox games, with my family which is where I fell in love with the sport of baseball," said Avard. I later interned with the team and saw firsthand the positive influence the team had on the local

families and local community, similar to what I had personally experienced growing up," she added.

"The Blue Sox reputation has grown tremendously over the past few years, making the team a staple throughout Western Mass, said Avard. "Stepping into the role of General Manager, I hope I am able to build upon the relationship the organization has with the community and grow the team in the coming years."

Summer Challenge announced for Thompson

THOMPSON, Conn. -- Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park and Save The Purse jointly announced on Thursday that competitors in the NASCAR Weekly Racing Series Late Model division will have three, 50-lap feature races in 2020 as part of a new Late Model Mid-Summer Challenge.

A group of competitors joined together over the offseason to form Save The Purse, a group that has come up with additional purse money through sponsors and have put it towards these special events. The group is run by recognized racing crew member Brad Martel.

Each of the three events will pay \$2,000 to the winner, \$1,000 for second and \$750 for third. A full purse will be distributed to the top 25 competitors. The races will take place as part of the three standalone NASCAR Weekly Racing Series events scheduled for June 3, July 8 and Aug. 5.

Thompson Speedway is committed to the future of oval track racing and in 2020 has planned a six-race NASCAR schedule. With the addition of a night of double features for all five NASCAR divisions, competitors will have the chance

to run seven feature races.

These Late Model special events are going to be a must-watch for all race fans. "Watching a group of racers come together and come up with funds to increase the purse is something special, and we are happy to work with them," Terry Eames, the General Manager of Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, said. "We're looking forward to watching competitors race for this extra purse money while running some extra laps. Fans won't want to miss these special events."

"We were determined to come up with the best possible solution to increase the purse value at Thompson in 2020," Brad Martel, the Director of Save The Purse, said. "We're looking forward to watching a competitive division competed in double their normal distance for some extra cash."

Sponsors included in the Mid-Summer Classic will be announced later. As part of these special night events, the NASCAR Weekly Racing Series Sunoco Modifieds, SK Light Modifieds, Limited Sportsman and Mini Stocks will join the action.

Thompson Speedway also runs in the Late Model program under American Ca-

nadian Tour rules, and in 2020, will also be part of the New England Late Model Challenge Cup. Thompson is one of five tracks in the program – one that will have all scheduled weekly Late Model events eligible to receive points towards winning the Cup. ACT will take the 10 best finishes for each registered driver across all five tracks and count it towards the drivers totals, with a special points system in place based on a driver's feature finishes and event car counts, with bonus points for wins and cars passed. With the three events paying additional purse, these could be races that drivers across New England elect to attend to earn crucial points.

With COVID-19 sweeping through the United States, Thompson officials have been forced to update the 2020 schedule. Currently, the 46th annual Ice-breaker presented by Liquid Death is tentatively scheduled for May 15-16. A full schedule of postponed events will be released later.

For more information on Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, visit thompsonspeedway.com and follow the track on social media.

SPRING from page 7

The spring season includes the most number of sports played in the least period of time, usually about eight weeks. Spring sports include: Baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, girls track, boys track, boys tennis, girls tennis, and boys volleyball.

Athletes have been shut down since March 10 during the state tournament week. Spring practices never happened.



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD20P0557GD

In the matter of: Brietta Brown Of: Chicopee, MA RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Vibra Hospital of W Mass** of Springfield, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that **Brietta Brown** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a

Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **4/17/2020**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First

Justice of this Court.
Date: March 20, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate
4/02/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD20P0174EA Estate of: Helene B Tadeo Date of Death: 12/23/2019 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Timothy T Tadeo** of Chicopee MA and **Glenn D Tadeo** of Chicopee MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Timothy T Tadeo** of Chicopee MA and **Glenn D Tadeo** of Chicopee MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an **unsupervised** administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the

Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of **04/27/2020**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: March 23, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate
4/02/2020

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Consumers facing financial hardships urged to contact banks

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Bankers Association is urging consumers facing financial hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic to contact their financial institution for assistance.

Banks throughout the commonwealth have pledged to work with their customers – individuals and businesses – to mitigate the financial impact of the current health crisis.

“We strongly encourage anyone who is unable to make a payment on their loan, needs access to funds in a certificate of deposit or other relief to contact their financial institution for options to help them through this unprecedented situation,” said Daniel J. Forte, MBA president and CEO. “Local banks are ready and willing to help during these challenging times, but it is important that you reach out as soon as possible.”

Most local banks have already announced programs to assist consumers. For example, Greenfield Cooperative Bank is offering a “payment holiday” for

residential and commercial loan customers; Berkshire Bank has established special relief programs for the LGBTQ and minority-owned business communities while Rockland Trust Company, Eastern Bank, Bank of America and many others have announced significant initiatives to support local residents and small businesses.

MBA has created a “COVID-19 Resource” page online at massbankers.org.

In addition to relief on mortgages and other loans, banks are working with customers who may need access to funds in Certificates of Deposit, waiving fees for certain products or transactions, and increasing daily debit or ATM limits where appropriate. MBA anticipates additional programs will be developed in the coming days and weeks to assist individuals and businesses as Congress considers a major economic stimulus package in Washington, D.C.

For more information, visit www.massbankers.org.

State Auditor Bump asks towns to report early voting spending

BOSTON – After Bay State voters went to the polls to take part in early voting in the presidential primary election for the first time last month, State Auditor Suzanne M. Bump is asking city and town clerks to provide an accounting of unfunded, mandated costs related to that service.

Bump will use this information to provide a formal certification of these costs to the legislature and ask it to allocate funds in a future supplemental budget to reimburse these communities. Bump is asking for responses from cities and towns by Monday, April 20.

“Cities and towns spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to make voting in the presidential primary easier and more convenient. This is a good thing. However, with no process to reimburse them, these communities could be stuck with a bill that should be covered by the state,” Bump said. “The legislature must allocate funds to reimburse these communities and remove uncertainty about future elections by establishing a permanent and predictable method to fund this important service.”

In 2017, through her office’s Division of Local Mandates, Bump determined that parts of the early voting law are unfunded mandates on cities and towns and that the state should cover these costs. Her mandate determination cited the requirements that municipalities establish an early voting polling location that has sufficient staffing and privacy for voters as the factors driving the conclusion.

Since the early voting law was passed in 2014, the state has failed to establish a permanent and consistent method to fund communities’ expenses to provide this service. Instead, it has relied on a series of reimbursements in supplemental budgets passed after the 2016 and 2018 elections to retroactively reimburse communities for their mandated expenses. Following a cost certification by Bump’s office, in the 2018 general election, communities were reimbursed \$1,144,156.22 for mandated early voting expenses.

Bump has worked with Rep. Steven Ultrino and Rep. Brad Jones to pass legislation that would establish a permanent method to fund mandated municipal costs associated with early voting.

Banks to remain open, customers urged to bank electronically

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Bankers Association announced that banks throughout the commonwealth will remain open while keeping their customers and employees safe.

According to Gov. Charlie Baker’s order issued March 23, financial institutions such as banks are considered essential services and will not be subject to the closure.

“While we strongly encourage all Massachusetts residents to heed the Governor’s stay at home advisory and use online or mobile banking, consumers will continue to have access to banking services during the mandatory non-essential business closure,” said Daniel J. Forte, MBA president and CEO. “The safest place for your money right now is in your local bank where it is insured up to \$250,000 by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Many Massachusetts banks also have excess insurance to protect your funds.”

Consumers needing access to bank-

ing services should check with their institution, as many banks have closed branch lobbies, reduced hours or shifted to drive-through only at some locations in an effort to protect their customers and employees, the MBA advises. However, bank staff are available to serve customers and answer questions. In addition, access to funds through online and mobile banking, ATMs and at point of sale transactions remains available during this time.

The Massachusetts Bankers Association represents 135 commercial, savings, cooperative, and federal savings banks and savings and loan associations with approximately \$380 billion in local assets, 72,000 employees across Massachusetts and New England, over 2,000 banking locations, more than 4,500 ATMs, and donate more than \$105 million annually to social agencies and charitable organizations across the commonwealth. For more information, visit www.massbankers.org.

Baystate seeks critical blood donations

SPRINGFIELD – As President Donald Trump left the White House briefing room during a recent coronavirus update, someone shouted out “donate blood!”

It was an important message. The need is so great that Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker included blood and platelet donors on his list of essential services.

America faces a severe blood shortage during the novel coronavirus pandemic and the U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams is urging healthy individuals to donate blood as the crisis unfolds.

Until further notice during the COVID-19 pandemic, Baystate Health is relocating all blood and platelet donation to 361 Whitney Ave. in Holyoke.

Blood donations will take place daily, Monday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome, but

appointments are suggested and can be made by calling 413-794-4600.

Platelet donations will also occur at Whitney Avenue, but are by appointment only at 413-794-4600.

Additional protocols are being implemented during the coronavirus pandemic for the safety and health of donors, including:

- Prescreening donors
- Extra precautionary cleaning
- Spacing out donors to comply with social distancing and group gathering restrictions.

All eligible donors will receive a ticket to Six Flags (for future use, valid through Jan. 3, 2021) and a gift card to Big Y or Dunkin’.

Contact the Baystate Health Blood Donor Center at 413-794-4600 with questions or to make an appointment.

Ocean State Job Lot sourcing health care supplies from global vendors

NORTH KINGSTOWN, R.I. – Ocean State Job Lot, a discount closeout retailer with stores throughout New England, in response to the calls from government for vital health care supplies, announced last week it is using its global supply chain to source such materials for use in the response to the novel coronavirus.

Supplies will be immediately donated to local and state governments, as well as hospitals and medical facilities.

“COVID-19 is affecting all of us in every community and Ocean State Job Lot is prepared to its part to help,” David Sarlitto, executive director of the Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation, said. “Our unique buying process allows us the flexibility to move swiftly and purchase the items most in need.”

Among the supplies the retailer is sourcing are gloves, masks, disinfectants, sanitizers and eye protection. Ocean State will contribute up to \$250,000 into a ded-

icated fund for acquiring the supplies. Individuals may contribute to this fund at the register.

Considered a retailer selling essential goods, Ocean State Job Lot will remain open at this time.

“We realize this is a challenging time for many who are facing unemployment,” Sarlitto said. “But we’ve also seen and heard stories of people looking for ways to help our first responders. Who are putting their own lives on the line to help us all. So for those who are capable of giving right now, this is a great opportunity to make your dollar have the greatest impact possible.”

Sarlitto said the retailer will ensure 100 percent of donations are used to purchase supplies and utilize its buying power to “get the most for your money.”

For more information, visit oceanstatejoblot.com.

MHA accepting personal care donations for ‘Good to Go’ initiative

SPRINGFIELD – As families everywhere hunker down at home to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, you may wonder what’s happening to people who don’t have family to help.

Perhaps you’ve wondered what’s happening with the most vulnerable members of our community? Hopefully you’ve wondered how we can come together to help them.


One simple and effective way is by donating personal care items for MHA’s “Good To Go” initiative. Good To Go collects donations of basic personal care items like toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, feminine hygiene products and socks. MHA then provides these items to people served by the agency who are intellectually or developmentally disabled, challenged by mental health, new in their recovery from addiction, or chronically homeless.

“A member of MHA’s Outreach team came into the office today and said, ‘The Good to Go inventory is getting low!’ and she was right,” said Kimberley A. Lee, vice president of resource development and branding for MHA. “As the

virus crisis continues, many individuals served by MHA’s Outreach Team need extra help. These are folks who are living independently, but who because of a mental health challenge or intellectual disability require just a few hours a week of visits to ensure for their health and wellbeing. They live on their own in the community with little or no family, so MHA team members are their trusted caregivers.”

Lee said by supporting their need for personal care items, folks can help these individuals stretch their budgets to afford other necessities, like food. Additionally, she said MHA accepts donations of other items including reading materials like books and magazines.

In keeping with current CDC recommendations to limit personal contact, donations should be delivered to MHA’s main office at 995 Worthington St., Springfield. Donors are directed to leave them by the employee entrance on the side of the building and to contact Lee at 413-233-5343 or klee@mhainc.org to let know her know that items have been left for Good To Go.



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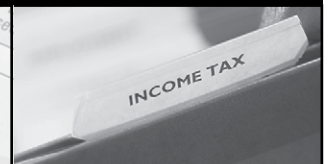


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